

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LA PAZ 05732 211241Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-20 HA-05
/084 W

-----008896 211244Z /50

P R 202050Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1735
INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCSO J2 QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

UNCLAS LA PAZ 5732

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, BL, MILI
SUBJECT: ARMY COMMANDER COMMENTS ON ANNULMENT OF ELECTIONS

REF: LA PAZ 5699

1. IN THE WAKE OF THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL COURT'S DECISIONS TO ANNUL THE JULY 9 ELECTIONS AND RECOMMEND THAT NEW ELECTIONS BE HELD WITHIN 180 DAYS AND PRESIDENT BANZER'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT ON AUGUST 6 HE WOULD SURRENDER POWER TO THE INSTITUTION OF THE ARMED FORCES, THE ONLY PUBLIC REACTION FROM A SENIOR MILITARY OFFICIAL HAS COME FROM ARMY COMMANDER GENERAL ALFONSO VILLALPANDO, WHO WILL PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN DECIDING HOW THE NEW GOVERNMENT TO TAKE OFFICE AUGUST 6 WILL BE CONSTITUED. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS JULY 20, VILLALPANDO SAID THAT HE SUPPORTS THE DECISION TO ANNUL THE ELECTIONS "AS AN ADEQUATE MEASURE DESIGNED TO CALM NATIONAL PUBLIC OPINION".

2. VILLALPANDO CONTINUED THAT THE ARMED FORCES HAVE NOT YET DECIDED WHAT FORM THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE. ONE FORM, HE
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SUGGESTED, WOULD BE A MILITARY JUNTA OF COMMANDERS WHICH, HE SAID, WOULD NOT IMPEDE THE CONTINUATION OF THE DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS. VILLALPANDO ADDED THAT THE ARMED FORCES WOULD HAVE TO ANALYZE THE SITUATION TO DETERMINE WHEN TO HOLD NEW ELECTIONS.

3. VILLALPANDO ATTRIBUTED THE INTERRUPTION OF THE ELECTION PROCESS TO THE "INTRANSIGENCE" OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES "FOR

HAVING TRIED TO TAKE WHAT DOES NOT BELONG TO THEM AND WHICH WAS
LEGITIMATELY IN CONTROL OF ANOTHER CANDIDATE."

4. VILLALPANDO REJECTED THE SUGGESTION THAT THE DECISION TO
CONVENE ELECTIONS JULY 9 HAD BEEN TAKEN BECAUSE OF EXTERNAL
PRESSURES, INCLUDING PRESSURES FROM THE US STATE DEPARTMENT.
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Message Attributes

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